

Message Text

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40

ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 SSO-00 NEA-10 ISO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

PM-03 L-03 H-02 NSC-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SAM-01 OMB-01 /047 W

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O P 041400Z JUL 75

FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7155

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1725

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AORG, UNESCO

SUBJ: REPORT OF NEW ISRAELI EXCAVATION PLANS FOR JERUSALEM

REF: STATE 157453

PARIS FOR UNESCO

1. REUTER REPORT ON PLANS FOR NEW EXCAVATIONS IN JERUSALEM PROBABLY OCCASIONED BY OPENING OF PUBLIC EXHIBIT IN JEWISH QUARTER OF OLD CITY JULY 1 ON PROPOSED PLAN FOR EXPANSION OF PLAZA IN FRONT OF WESTERN WALL. PROPOSAL, BY ARCHITECT MOSHE SAFDIE, IS NOT NEW IN CONCEPT, AS ISRAELI PLANS FOR RECONSTRUCTION OF JEWISH QUARTER HAVE ALWAYS INCLUDED IDEA OF EXPANSION OF THIS PLAZA. PRESS REPORTS THAT GOI MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON JERUSALEM DECIDED ON EXHIBIT IN ORDER OBTAIN PUBLIC REACTION TO SAFDIE PROPOSAL.

2. PROPOSAL CALLS FOR LOWERING OF PRESENT PLAZA LEVEL BY ABOUT NINE METERS, EXPOSING ADDITIONAL LAYERS OF STONES IN WESTERN WALL IN AREA NOW USED FOR PRAYERS. (ASSUME THIS APPROXIMATELY LEVEL OF CURRENT EXCAVATIONS TO SOUTH OF PRAYER.) PLAZA

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WOULD BE EXPANDED IN DIRECTION OF DUNG GATE AND WOULD

EVENTUALLY BE ABOUT TRIPLE PRESENT SIZE.

3. IN OPENING EXHIBIT MAYOR TEDDY KOLLEK SAID HE BELIEVED
FINAL "RENOVATION" OF PLAZA AREA WOULD PROBABLY DIFFER IN
MANY DETAILS FROM SAFDIE PLAN. THESE WOULD BE DICTATED
BY UNPREDICTABLE ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDINGS AND "OTHER CONSIDERA-
TIONS." HE ESTIMATE WORK WOULD TAKE FIVE TO TEN YEARS,
BUT THERE IS NO INDICATION SO FAR WHEN WORK MIGHT START.
IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT PROPOSAL DOES NOT HAVE
FINAL APPROVAL; IN ANY EVENT, COMMENTS OF PUBLIC
ONLY NOW BEING SOUGHT.
JONES

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